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3 November 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT : Time Factors in Construction of
Soviet Missile Bases in Cuba

1. The type of IRBM site which appeared to be under construction in Cuba would have required about two and one-half to three months after the time of the initial site survey to achieve full operational capability. With good quality photography, the first identification of this type of IRBM site could be made within two or three weeks after the survey, or nine to ten weeks prior to full operational status. None of the three identified IRBM sites in Cuba had reached an operational capability prior to withdrawal.

2. The MRBM sites in Cuba were of a field type, requiring a minimum amount of construction prior to the emplacement of equipment. These sites appear to have reached full operational capability in about three to four weeks after arrival of basic equipment at the site. Positive identification of the type of MRBM sites observed in Cuba would be difficult even with good quality photography prior to the arrival of the missile trailer and launcher-erector equipment at the site. In Cuba, this critical point in the delivery of equipment appears to have occurred about two weeks before the site became fully operational. Camouflage, concealment, or deception efforts could make positive identification more difficult.

3. Under optimum conditions, it would take no more than a week to complete the initial site survey, site preparation, and installation of equipment necessary for the type of MRBM system deployed in Cuba to achieve full operational status. With good

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photography, a site for such a system could be identified upon arrival of the missile equipment, which could occur within the first three to four days, or as late as 18 hours prior to full operational capability. At any time during site preparation an emergency capability to launch at least one missile could be achieved in about 18 hours after the missile unit arrived at the pre-surveyed site. Such an emergency effort was never made in Cuba.

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Deputy Director (Intelligence)

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